

REACTION TO THE FRENCH COLONIZATION OF INDO-CHINA

the Mission betrayed secrets of the confessional and delivered over Annamite nationalists to the scaffold, and that it used this occasion to take revenge on those villages which had refused to be converted. The Mission is so much disliked that it has become the target for contradictory attacks: the Communists hate it for being the government's ally, and the government in turn fears the Mission as a state within a state because of its influence over the natives. The Communists have an additional grievance in the resistance which native Christians have shown to the siren voice of Moscow. On both sides the uprisings covered revenge for a multitude of old grudges.

Nor has nationalism spared the bosom of the Church. Even at the time of Japan's victory there were not only fewer converts but fewer candidates for clerical ordination. Now the formation of a native priesthood is the primary preoccupation of the Society of Foreign Missions: the conversion of the infidel is but secondary. This is especially important as the War and anti-clerical laws have cut down the number of French missionaries sent out from France. Though the native clergy had a most honourable record during the era of persecutions, nevertheless the Society has shown a marked reluctance to promote Annamites in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. They have accepted the idea in principle, but in practice the French missionaries cling to the top positions. Right after the War the Annamite clergy showed a marked spirit of insubordination, paralleling the general nationalist movement. In 1922 a scandal broke out over the treatment of native priests supposed to be implicated in the theft of a French missionary's possessions. The following year a native priest at Chaudon murdered a French mission-

ary, and the Bishop of Pnom-Penh was accused of muzzling all complaints and the evidence of discontent. During the Emperor Khai Dinh's trip to Paris, an Annamite priest succeeded in presenting to the Vatican the native clergy's demands for equality of status with the French missionaries. In January 1926 an encyclical letter, *Remm Ecclesia*, tactfully rendered homage to" missionary devotion in Indo-China, but recalled to them the duty of Christian charity in making native priests their collaborators. A Papal Legate was sent to Hanoi as evidence of Rome's watchful care. Further steps taken by the Annamke clergy led to the nomination of a remarkable native bishop, Pere Six, who was given the diocese of Phat Diem. In 1925 a second native bishop was named. Pere Six had had a splendid record during the. heroic period¹ and after the French conquest he was made *cure* at Phat Dion,

¹ Olichon, Mgr., *Le Baron de Phat Diem* (Poitiers, 1931)*